EDD Employment Development Department
State of California

INFORMATION NOTICE
WORKFORCE SERVICES

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TO: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

SUBJECT: RESOURCES FOR FREE TAX PREPARATION AND FILING

The purpose of this Information Notice is to inform the Workforce Development Community about Free File and other web-based resources for free federal income tax preparation.

Free File is a service that offers free online federal tax preparation and e-filing options for taxpayers that have an adjusted gross income of $57,000 or less in tax year 2012. This service is made available through the Free File Alliance, a public-private partnership between the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and commercial tax software companies. Free File includes companies that offer tax preparation programs in both English and Spanish. These online programs provide step-by-step guidance and help taxpayers claim all the deductions and credits for which they qualify. For more information about Free File, please visit www.freefile.irs.gov/.

For individuals who do not meet the income eligibility requirement, Free File includes forms which enable all taxpayers to manually enter their federal tax data and e-file their federal return directly to the IRS for free. However, these taxpayers will not have the benefit of using tax preparation software.

Another free tax preparation resource is the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The VITA offers free tax preparation help to people who cannot prepare their own tax returns and whose income is $51,000 or less. One special focus of VITA is to help low-income individuals qualify for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and other credits, including the Child Care Tax Credit and Tax Credits for the Elderly and the Disabled. These tax credits, especially the EITC, can be important financial resources for low-income persons or families. Most VITA sites also offer free electronic filing and some offer assistance with Free File. To locate the nearest VITA site, call 1-800-906-9887 or visit irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/. For further information about VITA in California, please visit www.ftb.ca.gov/individuals/vita/index.shtml.

In addition, the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax counseling and basic income tax return preparation to people ages 60 and older. Working with TCE, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) also offers a

free tax counseling program for older individuals. For more information on TCE, call 1-800-906-9887. To locate the nearest AARP Tax-Aide site, call 1-888-227-7669 or visit [AARP's website](#).

Local Workforce Investment Area staff are encouraged to publicize these tax preparation resources to customers visiting One-Stop Career Centers. The Free File website, www.freefile.irs.gov/spread-the-word.html, provides a number of useful materials, including downloadable flyers and posters, frequently asked questions, social media tools, and public service announcements. Additionally, local area staff can order free printed Free File flyers and posters from the IRS National Distribution Center by calling 1-800-Tax-Form (1-800-829-3676). Staff should make use of these materials where possible, display posters in their One-Stop Career Centers, and become familiar with the Free File website in order to share information about this service with One-Stop Career Center customers. Although established priorities for computer use at One-Stop locations remain unchanged, local areas may choose to make computers available for free federal tax filing as resources permit.

/S/ MICHAEL EVASHENK, Chief
    Workforce Services Division